

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

25X1

TREND ANALYSIS OF "SOFT DATA" 1974-1975

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS/COMMENTS

-- Team B's criticisms about our use of "soft data" are particularly valid from the standpoint that the Community produces no document which annually addresses Soviet "grand strategy." Most of the principal NIEs assess aspects of Soviet military capabilities which, in the main, are based on hard data, and have generally tended to understate Soviet strategic goals and underestimate their weapons system deployments. Moreover, NIE participants may indeed be faulted for "mirror-imaging" (but there seems no way to understand precisely what damage has been done thereby, as no one in the West can define the extent to which Soviet strategic policy and force developments are in fact determined by the Soviet "grand strategy"/military doctrine we are accused of misinterpreting by "mirror-imaging"). Finally, Team B may be right in asserting that we do not pay sufficient, systematic, integrated analytical attention to the full stream of soft data emanating from the Soviet Union or otherwise collected. But, such an assertion can not be proved by merely reading the Estimates themselves. More research on this point is needed.

[-- On the other hand,] the Team B's charge that NIEs "either gloss over in silence the question of Soviet strategic objectives, or else treat the matter in a perfunctory manner"

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

TOP SECRET

is not accurate, when the full body of Community product is considered. In the 1974-75 period alone, there were at least **five** national/departamental estimates on analytical memoranda which in their entirety addressed relevant "soft data" issues; and each of the major military estimates specifically addressed this subject to varying degrees. NIE 11-3/8-74 is particularly strong in this regard, devoting a full 43 paragraphs to a balanced discussion of the factors influencing Soviet policy and the question of Soviet strategic objectives. (Perhaps this explains why the Team B's report essentially omits any reference to this NIE.) See attached notes for additional documentation.

-- As a related point, I fail to see how the Community can rightfully be charged with "misinterpreting" the large body of soft data on Soviet strategic concepts when this data is clearly open to various interpretations.

-- Finally, Team B argues that the proper intellectual methodology in treating Soviet matters is to start from a general, coherent view of Soviet "grand strategy" and work back to the specific hard evidence which supports such a view. The IC, on the other hand, works from the specific to the general in its estimating process. This, in my view, is the sounder approach.

SPECIFIC POINTS

-- Does hard data on weapons systems unduly influence the conclusions of interagency products on the Soviet military threat? The operative word here is "unduly" and there is no

TOP SECRET

way to answer this one, unless we could pick the brains of each participant in any particular product's development and bounce this against all soft and hard data available to the group (and to the Community). The conventional wisdom is that we are slaves to technology. And there is some truth to this, particularly during the decade 1963-73. But, we're getting better and isn't that what counts? For example, NIE 11-3/8-75 states:

"If the USSR's forces develop according to our best estimates, Soviet leaders can expect to achieve some gains relative to the US during the next ten years even though their forces will fall far short of giving them a near retaliation-free first-strike capability. We have projected Force 1 as the most likely Soviet program under a SALT TWO agreement on the basis of current evidence and past Soviet practices. It represents a vigorous, highly competitive Soviet effort to maintain and improve offensive and defensive forces and is generally consistent with previously observed Soviet activities. We can interpret many aspects of the Soviet strategic force developments which underlie our Force 1 projection as a prudent response to the present strategic situation. Silo hardening, MIRVing, mobile ICBM development, and even R&D on rapidly deployable ABM systems can be explained in terms of Soviet security needs, including needs to hedge against

potential US force improvements and the failure of the SALT process. Some other aspects of what we see--especially the growing threat to the Minuteman force from large numbers of more accurate, high-yield ICBM warheads, and the vigor of Soviet research and development in strategic systems--can be interpreted as motivated by a determination to achieve important strategic advantages over the US."

What fault can be found with this methodology and these conclusions?

-- Do the utility and judgments of interagency products suffer from a narrow definition of the "strategic threat" (i.e., equating strategic threat to "strategic nuclear forces")? I doubt that the utility to users of 11-3/8, 11-14 or 11-15 suffers because of the limited focus of each. What is lacking is a regular vehicle to tie them all together within the 11-4 framework.

-- The defensive, as contrasted with offensive, nature of Soviet military forces. Team B says this is a false dichotomy and they're right. They go on to say we emphasize the "defensive" nature too much. Team A says Pipes goes too far the other way. The truth lies in between.

-- The deterrent purposes of Soviet forces, as distinct from the war-waging or war-winning purposes of these forces. Again, a false dichotomy says Team B, which, as they accurately point out, we have been slow to recognize. Prior to about 1975 we can probably be faulted for insufficient attention to the more sinister purposes of Soviet force developments.

TOP SECRET

NIE 11-15-74 struck me as being particularly culpable in this regard. But, again, we're getting better. More recent estimates/memoranda are replete with references to the war-fighting/war-winning underpinnings of force development.

-- Quantitative and qualitative goals for Soviet forces, relative to those of the US and the West (inferiority? parity? superiority?) The attached documentation gives a feel for how this was treated during 1974-75.

-- The thesis that the Soviets will be satisfied with parity and that the arms race will decelerate when the Soviets achieve parity. Not particularly germane to the 1974-75 time frame, although 11-3/8-74 says "we doubt that the Soviets have firmly settled on acceptance of strategic parity or have decided to seek clear-cut strategic superiority" (with Service dissent).

-- The extent to which Soviet military programs proceed from internal USSR purposes, as contrasted with being reactions to US military programs. See the attached notes. Estimates during 1974-75 have recognized that both forces come into play. No one in the West can define their comparative impact with any degree of precision.

-- Soviet views on the feasibility of military superiority. Here's one area where a concerted "content analysis" approach to soft data could probably pay off.

-- The weight to be given to Soviet speeches, news articles, and other open (non-secret) declarations as indicators of Soviet intentions, in contrast with the view that these declarations are made for domestic political purposes and are not to be relied upon as indicators of intentions.

Believe the following passage from 11-3/8-75 accurately describes the Community's overall approach to this problem:

"There remains the question of the USSR's long-term objectives for its forces for intercontinental conflict and how they relate to other long-term military and political goals. Our understanding of this subject is far from complete. US perceptions of Soviet strategic objectives and future force structure are particularly sensitive to misinformation. We do not know how Soviet leaders describe, in private deliberations, their overall military objectives or the goals for their strategic nuclear forces. We know what they say publicly, in negotiations and discussions with certain Western officials and other contacts, and--occasionally--in forums to which they probably believe we have no access. It is a matter of interpretation, however, whether the statements implying goals of strategic superiority which are often made by lesser officials are mainly reflections of pervasive ideological principle or also represent practical objectives which the Soviet leaders expect to achieve. We base our judgments

about the Soviet leaders' objectives for inter-continental forces over the next few years on a combination of these Soviet statements and writings, the past and present military development and deployment activities which we observe, and our appreciation of the challenges, opportunities, and constraints operating on them, as summarized earlier in this chapter." (NO)

Sounds good, doesn't it?

Finally, on the subject of the extent to which NIEs document their "soft data" judgments, let me quote from an article in the Fall 1964 issue of Studies in Intelligence:

"It is true that the judgments of an NIE float in the empyrean and impress with their apparently unrooted boldness. It is also true, however, that the writers of those sentences approach them with prayer and fasting, and work them out in fiery give and take, often over long periods of time, in working groups which can test to their heart's content the background of information and fact that underlies each agency's opinion. If sometimes our NIEs approach being a little too empyrean, so do the problems that our superiors and world affairs force us to examine."

NIE 11-3/8-75 (Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict
Through the Mid-1980s) (17Nov75)

KEY JUDGMENTS

-- NIE devotes over two pages of an eight plus page section to "Soviet Objectives." States that "our judgments about the strategic objectives of the Soviet leaders are based on what they say (in public and sometimes in private), on what we observe of their programs, and on our appreciation of the internal and external forces operating on them in the present period of risky opportunities" (pp.2-3). No reference to any specific "soft data;" no mention of Soviet rejection of "mutual assured destruction" concepts.

-- Concludes that the "scope and vigor of (their strategic) programs ... raise the elusive question of whether the Soviet leaders embrace as an objective some form of strategic nuclear superiority over the U.S." (p.5). (Note that the NIE argues from the "hard" evidence back to the "soft" objectives not vice versa.)

-- Argues that only if they achieve very rapid technological advance, combined with a large Soviet force build-up in the absence of SALT II agreement, could the USSR achieve "capabilities that might be perceived as giving it more strategic power to back up its policies than that available to the U.S." (p.9). Postulated as "the most threatening but unlikely" circumstance.

TOP SECRET

SUMMARY SECTION

-- NIE devotes almost five pages (out of 26 pages of text) to "soft" data issues--USSR's Current Strategic Situation; Factors Influencing Soviet Strategic Policy; and Long-Term Soviet Objectives for Intercontinental Nuclear Forces. Frequent references to statements/doctrine/writings (including Soviet rejection of mutual assured destruction concepts); no specific "soft" data cited.

-- Raises the "elusive question" of "how seriously, if at all, they're pursuing" strategic superiority (p.11).

-- They "appear to maintain an ideological faith" that the West is declining vis-a-vis the USSR; but are probably uncertain about US resolve (DOD dissent) (p.13).

-- NIE says "we don't believe they presently think they'll achieve superiority by 1985" (Air Force dissent) (p.18).

-- At several points the NIE pictures the Soviets as conservative, prudent military planners who make worst-case assumptions and develop their forces therefrom (i.e., reactive vice active; defensive vice offensive tone) (cf pp.48-49).

-- NIE's concluding discussion of the Likely Strategic Environment Through 1985 includes a balanced appraisal of those Soviet activities that can be explained as prudent Soviet responses to the changing environment and those that have more sinister interpretations:

TOP SECRET

"We have projected Force 1 as the most likely Soviet program under a SALT TWO agreement on the basis of current evidence and past Soviet practices. It represents a vigorous, highly competitive Soviet effort to maintain and improve offensive and defensive forces and is generally consistent with previously observed Soviet activities. We can interpret many aspects of the Soviet strategic force developments which underlie our Force 1 projection as a prudent response to the present strategic situation. Silo hardening, MIRVing, mobile ICBM development, and even R&D on rapidly deployable ABM systems can be explained in terms of Soviet security needs, including needs to hedge against potential US force improvements and the failure of the SALT process. Some other aspects of what we see--especially the growing threat to the Minuteman force from large numbers of more accurate, high-yield ICBM warheads, and the vigor of Soviet research and development in strategic systems--can be interpreted as motivated by a determination to achieve important strategic advantages over the US."

VOLUME II - THE ESTIMATE

- No significant difference in the use of "soft" data from that outlined above.
- The problem is neatly summarized on p.10 as follows:

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

There remains the question of the USSR's long-term objectives for its forces for intercontinental conflict and how they relate to other long-term military and political goals. Our understanding of this subject is far from complete. US perceptions of Soviet strategic objectives and future force structure are particularly sensitive to misinformation. We do not know how Soviet leaders describe, in private deliberations, their overall military objectives or the goals for their strategic nuclear forces. We know what they say publicly, in negotiations and discussions with certain Western officials and other contacts, and--occasionally--in forums to which they probably believe we have no access. It is a matter of interpretation, however, whether the statements implying goals of strategic superiority which are often made by lesser officials are mainly reflections of pervasive ideological principle or also represent practical objectives which the Soviet leaders expect to achieve. We base our judgments about the Soviet leaders' objectives for intercontinental forces over the next few years on a combination of these Soviet statements and writings, the past and present military development and deployment activities which we observe, and our appreciation of the challenges, opportunities, and constraints operating on them, as summarized earlier in this chapter.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

J.M.E. COMMENTS

The NIE clearly adopts the overall procedure of seeing what the "hard" data tells us about objectives (reasoning from the specific to the general) rather than vice-versa à la Team B.

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

NIE 11-14-75 (Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO) (4Sep75)PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

The evidential base for the Principal Judgments appears to be a balanced blend of Soviet doctrinal writings ("soft") and exercise/force disposition information ("hard").

-- Reference to classified/unclassified writings in re Soviet views of nuclear escalation (p.3); "standing start" war (pp.4 and 5); and use of CW weapons (p.6).

DISCUSSION SECTION

- Numerous general references throughout to Soviet doctrine/writings (pp.8, 10, 11, 18, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31, 43ff). No specific sources cited; no indication of the date of the information; no clear indication of what is actually doctrine, what is inference based on exercises, what is analyst's judgment, and where "doctrine" actually equates to "employment concepts."

- States that "our evidence on Soviet theater war-fighting concepts during the last few years is mainly from (p.10) (N.B. NATO is "always the aggressor" in these exercises, p.26).

J.M.E. COMMENTS

- NIE adequately portrays the dire I&W implications for NATO of the Soviets' "prudent planning assumption" that war might begin from a "standing start."

- But, the NIE's overall image of the Soviet threat is non-sinister insofar as it judges that the USSR's "drive to maintain superiority" in NATO/WP conventional forces

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

through 1979 is defensive and reactive in nature and explained primarily by the fact that the Soviets are "extremely conservative" military planners (p.43ff).

- Moreover, the principal conclusion of the NIE is that "we believe the Soviets, given this larger view of the existing (strategic) balance, consider both NATO and WP to be deterred from initiating war" (p.2).

- The single allusion to a more hawkish view of Soviet objectives is buried in the text where the NIE notes that the dramatic recent increase in the size of WP forces "suggests more ambitious policy options" (p.8).

- Finally, critics have claimed that the NIE leaves the reader with a confusing picture regarding how the Soviets view the outcome of a war in Europe [they (1) believe their ground forces offensive would be successful, yet (2) fear their troops could be stopped by NATO air forces; so they (3) plan to preemptively attack NATO air facilities; but (4) don't, presumably, expect to achieve the surprise necessary to carry out such an attack].

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

TOP SECRET

NIE 11-15-74 (Soviet Naval Policy and Programs) (23Dec74)

PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

- Contains a one paragraph reference to doctrine regarding Soviets' probable war scenario (p.2) but no discussion of overall objectives or citing of specific "soft" data.
- No sweat regarding US SSBN vulnerability over the next decade (p.4).
- Brief mention of the Soviet decision to use its navy more extensively out-of-area to support foreign policy objectives (p.6).
- Overall tone is quite non-sinister.

DISCUSSION SECTION

- References to "soft" data throughout (pp.9 ff, 13, 22, 30, 31, 43, 45, 47, 61) including:
 - Section on "Soviet Views of the Nature, Course and Tasks of War with the US" (general references to discussions, writings and doctrine evincing a "loosening up" in re inevitability of escalation to general nuclear war; no mention of their drive for superiority/war-winning forces and rejection of mutual assured destruction).
 - Section on "Peacetime Operations in Soviet Policy."
 - Specific references to Gorshkov writings (e.g., need for a "balanced" navy) (N.B. considerable weight is given to these writings in Annex F when projecting future Soviet

TOP SECRET

naval forces. But the NIE still attaches greater overall importance to actual Soviet behavior (programs and activities)).

J.M.E. COMMENTS

- NIE clearly emphasizes the defensive/deterrent purpose of Soviet naval forces and pictures Soviet leaders as prudent calculators of risk, desiring not to push the US too hard (cf, e.g., paras 43, 47, 52, 63 and Annex paras 17 and 20).

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

NIE 11-3/8-74 (Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict

Through the Mid-1980s (14Nov74)

KEY JUDGMENTS

- Several general references to doctrine (e.g., war-fighting capabilities are the best deterrent).

- "We believe the Soviet leaders ... see no contradiction between their current strategic programs and their detente policies."

- "We doubt that the Soviets have firmly settled on acceptance of strategic parity or have decided to seek clear-cut strategic superiority" (but DOD Services dissent: they're fully committed to superiority). Estimate Soviet leaders will be both prudent and opportunistic (if US behavior permits) in their practical policy decisions.

- "Extremely unlikely that during the next ten years the Soviets will conclude that they can launch an attack which would prevent devastating US retaliation."

SUMMARY/VOLUME II-THE ESTIMATE

- Contains an extended discussion (43 paragraphs) of "soft data" questions including numerous general and some specific references to statements, doctrine, writings.

-- Factors Influencing Soviet Strategic Policy (paras 8-34). Discusses detente, SALT, economic considerations, bureaucratic interests, threat perceptions, strategic nuclear doctrine, and limited nuclear options:

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

- "Some aspects of traditional Soviet ideology and military doctrine pose serious obstacles to stabilizing US-Soviet strategic relationships (para 15).
- References to Soviet military literature (para 17).
- Discussion of Soviet strategic nuc doctrine (paras 20-30) "... the thrust has been to assert that victory could be achieved."
- "While military writers appear to be unanimously in favor of 'superiority' we are unable to identify an agreed Soviet definition of it or a coherent Soviet approach to achieving it" (para 23).
- "We believe that [strategic preemption] is one of the strategic options that actively influence Soviet force posture decisions" (para 27).
- "Soviet thinking on deterrent policy continues to exhibit traits that occasion anxiety in the U.S." (para 30).
- "The Question of Soviet Strategic Objectives" (paras 35-50):
 - Suggests Politburo is divided on priorities: detente vs more systems.
 - Judges they're following a policy of "pragmatic opportunism."
 - Includes eight paras on the dissenting Service view ("we're convinced they're striving for superiority").

~~TOP SECRET~~

No specific evidence cited ~~ANYWHERE IN THE SECTION~~.
-- Discussion à la the 1975 NIE regarding which force developments are explained by prudent Soviet responses to the present strategic situation vs those that could be interpreted as a drive for strategic superiority.

-- Four force projections which are dependent on: SAL/ASM treaties; level of technological achievement; rates of deployment; international situation; ^{and} programmed US forces. (Two of the projections are quite sombre).

-- But predicts with confidence that the basis for MAD will continue to exist thru 1985 (primarily due to no foreseen tech breakthrough) (para 63).

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

ESTIMATES ON "SOFT DATA" SUBJECTS

NIE 11-5-75 (Soviet Assessment of the US) (9Oct75)

-- US strengths and weaknesses as they affect both the international "correlation of forces" and US attitudes towards USSR in context of detente.

-- "Balance sheet is changing in the USSR's favor" (p.1).

-- Nucweps balance equates to "rough balance."

-- They see dimmed prospects for making detente "irreversible."

-- Very few specific source data references.

DIEM 5-75 (Objectives in Soviet Strategy) (15Sep75)

-- General references to statements, writings, etc.

-- Emphasizes the intertwining of polit/eco/military facets of Soviet goals.

-- "It would be hazardous to ignore the strength of Soviet conviction reflected in [Soviet pronouncements about the inevitable triumph of socialism] (p.5).

-- The Soviets "genuinely believe that the balance of world forces has already moved in their favor."

-- "Particular Soviet goals and policies should be assessed in light of their actual or potential contribution to the broader Soviet strategic objectives."

DIE SOV 2-75 (Detente in Soviet Strategy) (25Jul75)

-- Numerous general and specific references to "soft" data.

TOP SECRET

-- "It is unlikely that a detailed blueprint for winning the global contest exists in Moscow" (p.7).

-- "The theme of superiority runs through their continuous quest for advantages in the nuclear sphere" (p.8).

DIE SOV 4-74 (Soviet Intentions for Fighting Nuclear War in Europe) (27Aug74)

-- Many references to doctrinal writings (they're thinking about the concept of limited nuc war); but "perhaps the strongest evidence that the Soviets do not intend to engage in a constrained nuc war in Europe is manifest in their force posture" (p.5).

-- "Soviets will not come close to matching NATO's capabilities in nuc-capable tactical weapons in the foreseeable future" (p.8).

NIAM 11-9-74 (Soviet Detente Policy) (23May74)

-- They would like to believe that they need not make the hard choice between a continuing strategic arms buildup and detente, but can pursue both simultaneously.

-- Their objectives probably include an opportunistic desire to press ahead and achieve a margin of superiority if they can.

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0

OTHER DOD PRODUCTS REVIEWED

- (1) DIEM 3-75 (Backfire Bomber in Soviet Force Planning and SALT) (27Jun75)
- (2) DIE SOV 7-74 (Implications of Recent Developments in Soviet Ocean Surveillance and Anti-Ship Missiles) (18Dec74)

"These developments bring the Soviets to the verge of significantly improving their ability to challenge Western naval deployments."

- (3) SDIE SOV 6-74 (Soviet Kiev Class Carrier: Role and Implications) (27Sep74)

Contributes to "Soviet development of improved capabilities for open-ocean ASW operations." (p.2)

- (4) SDIE SOV 5-74 (Soviet Strategic Mobile Missile Developments and Their Implications for SALT) (19Sep74)

"Probably was undertaken by the Soviets as a hedge against the uncertainties of SALT II." (p.7)

- (5) DIE SOV 3-74 (Soviet Long Range Aviation: Flexible Force for Future Conflict) (3Jun74)

- (6) DIANM 2-74 (Soviet Strategic Counterforce Mission, The New ICBMs and SALT) (27Nov74)

- "Their war-winning and deterrence doctrines are essentially one." (p.v)

- "Thus, the Soviets may now see, after nearly 20 years of effort, tangible progress toward their war-winning, counterforce goals." (p.v)

- Discussion of doctrine incorporated in 11-3/8-74.

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/10/23 : CIA-RDP83M00171R001200210001-0